

GAMEFACE

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MAGAZINE

**MARQUIS
GRISSOM:
TOO GOOD
TO BE TRUE**

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Special thanks to everyone who assisted the Advertising/Publications staff of the Indians in the development of this publication.

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Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson



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by Jim Ingraham He's a true professional, whose passion he displays on the field for the game he loves matches the compassion he shows off the field for the people he loves.

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by Jack De Vries *The fifth in a historical series of Tribe greats.* Hal Trosky loved baseball. As a youngster, the Norway, Iowa, native would smash corn cobs deep into the fields. But by 1934, Trosky was lighting up Cleveland. Everyone thought he was headed for the Hall of Fame, and then...

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by Richard Keller Baseball isn't just the all-American sport. The beloved game has a serious following in Japan, and recently Major League clubs have crossed the Pacific on a more regular basis to sign players and player development and scouting agreements.

64 The Original Cleveland Indian

by Jack De Vries One hundred years ago, Louis Sockalexis was the most celebrated athlete in Cleveland—but who was he? Today, Sockalexis steps nimbly between fact and fiction. But one thing is for certain: If not for Louis Sockalexis, there would be no Cleveland "Indians."

87 Big League Blessings

by Jack De Vries As he plans to retire, Kevin Seitzer has much to look back on and be thankful for: 1,600 hits, five .300+ season, two All-Star appearances, an incredible post season berth and, most of all, the respect of his teammates, opponents, and the fans.

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by Curtis Danburg

Just like in any business, baseball has its share of behind-the-scenes work that goes on in order to create the final product, which in this instance is the team on the playing field. Fans come to the Ballpark to experience an event and help support their favorite team to victory. A very integral part in forming a successful team begins with the Baseball Operations Department. One of the driving forces in this department is the scouting division. These individuals provide information to form the best possible team and prepare that team for their opponents.

The focus of a Major League Organization is on its players and their development from Rookie League ball to the Major League level. There are basically three different aspects of scouting: the scouts that assist in the amateur draft, the scouts that monitor the progress of talent at the Minor and Major league level, and the advanced scouting that deals with the preparation for an upcoming opponent.

"At the Major League level we have four scouts and they contribute most to trades and free-agent signings at the Major League level," said Assistant Scouting Director Josh Byrnes. "Three of the four go into Triple-A and also cover the corresponding team. The fourth covers all 28 Major League teams."

One of the key components to the Club's "Blueprint for Success," developed in 1990, was to build a foundation by committing to player development that focused on revitalizing the Indians farm system. With that in mind, it has been imperative for the Indians to have success in the June Amateur draft. "Our core group consists of 22 people who get out and see players before the draft," Byrnes explained. "Our free-agent scouts from the January Draft are 100% devoted to covering amateur players and preparing for the draft. There are 16 territories with area scouts, three regional supervisors, a national crosschecker, and the Indians front office scouting personnel. Once the draft is over, they start doing Minor League coverage with each scout having between five and eight clubs.

"When it's all said and done in September, we have done a draft, we have hopefully seen every Minor Leaguer, and we've seen every Major League and Triple-A player at least twice," said Byrnes.

Once the players are put into place, it is the responsibility of Baseball Operations Assistant Paul DePodesta to create the advanced scouting reports. "Essentially it's a multiple step process. First I have to watch the opponent and typically stay one step ahead of the team. So if we're playing Boston, I'm watching Seattle," explained DePodesta.

"I'll probably watch five of the upcoming opponents' latest games, charting every pitch. I chart every pitch in terms of pitch-type and location, then it gets broken down into every count. When a ball is put into play, we

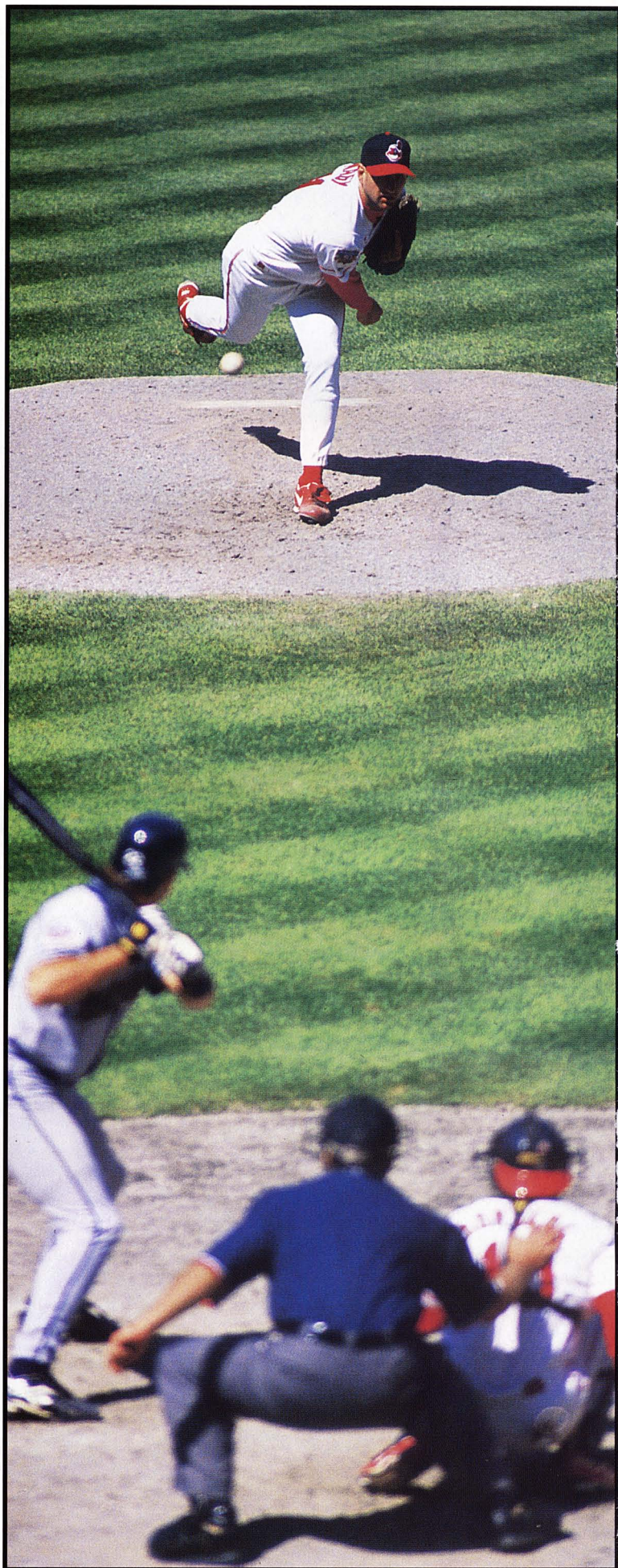


Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdron



Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson

Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson

account for nearly every variable that could take place in a baseball game and the computer helps separate it all out," DePodesta said. "While I'm charting, I'm also taking notes on each hitter and opposing pitchers. Basically I look for trends, so our team knows what to expect."

"With that done, all the charting and note-taking, I start writing all of this out on everybody along with printing out a number of charts," said DePodesta. "We print out defensive charts which show where every ball is hit. So I'll write up a report on every hitter and pitcher and include the appropriate chart. Finally, I'll write a team summary explaining what the team and manager likes to do in certain situations and perhaps the strengths and weaknesses of that club."

A typical advanced report from beginning to end takes about 20-25 hours—from watching the games, taking the notes, writing everything up, printing, putting it together in the appropriate order, and finally, distributing it.

"Once I put all of that together, it goes to the coaches, depending on what's appropriate for their areas of specialty," said DePodesta. "Then they not only prepare themselves, but the players they're dealing with also."

Another member of the Baseball Operations Department, Rob Elwood, performs basically the same tasks as DePodesta, but Elwood focuses strictly on charting all the Indians games. Instead of seeing the trends of the opposing teams, his reports give the coaching staff an idea of how their club is playing and approaching certain situations.

"We usually get reports the day before a game," said Indians Pitching Coach Mark Wiley. "We use all of the information we have, which is already capsulized, and then I'll add my past information and notes from the last time we played that team. I make a composite of all the information to simplify everything in order to present it to the team, which in my case is the pitchers and catchers."

"Before each series we have meetings with our areas of specialty to discuss the upcoming opponent," said Wiley. "When we present the information to the players, we try to do what we can to keep their interest. For example, we show video presentations to go along with the advanced report."

Wiley believes that advanced scouting, "Gives you something to go by instead of nothing. Talent still plays the biggest part though and also makes the report better because if you find something a player can take advantage of and he has talent, then he has a much better chance of taking advantage of that weakness."

DePodesta added, "It all comes down to the players having to do it. They make me look good. I might say this particular hitter might get locked up on an inside fastball with two strikes, but it takes Charlie Nagy or Jack McDowell to be able to do it. It's not my information that's striking the batter out."

DePodesta summed it up by explaining that, "Advanced scouting attempts to get any extra advantage we can in order to be totally prepared in knowing our opponent. That's the name of the game—you have to know the opponent if you're going to beat them."

Baseball's most important pitch this season won't come from a mound. In an effort to combat drinking and driving, Major League Baseball, together with the Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management (TEAM) coalition, continues to make a comprehensive appeal to fans this year. The message: PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!

As part of the TEAM program, each Major League club reviews its alcohol policies and runs public service announcements asking fans to drink responsibly and warns them against the consequences of drinking and driving.

The Cleveland Indians want you safe, because we want you back. Please drink responsibly.

In an effort to make everyone's visit to the Ballpark as safe and enjoyable as possible, a list of guidelines has been developed.

The Indians ask that you follow these guidelines, or be subject to ejection from the Ballpark, and in some cases, subject to criminal prosecution by the Cleveland Police Department.

To ensure that each game is a pleasant experience for each and every guest, the Indians have established the following "Ground Rules:"

- Jacobs Field is a non-smoking facility with designated smoking areas. Non-smoking areas include: the entire seating bowl of the Ballpark (including the outdoor seating of Suites and Club Seats); KidsLand; and all public rest rooms. Smoking is permitted in the following areas: Back Yard; Patio area on the Main Concourse; all three Concourse levels (Main, Mezzanine and Upper Deck) on the East Ninth Street side of the Ballpark and Upper Deck pavilion area on the Carnegie side

of the Ballpark (all of these locations are open-air areas with picnic tables, concession stands, and rest room facilities nearby); Bleacher Concourse on Eagle Ave. side of the Ballpark. In addition, the Terrace Club and Club Lounge have both smoking and non-smoking areas. Jacobs Field has signage identifying designated smoking areas for your convenience.

- Cans, glass bottles, plastic beverage containers, thermos bottles, and squeeze bottles are not permitted into Jacobs Field.
- Due to security concerns, hard-sided coolers/containers are not permitted. Soft-sided containers and coolers are permitted.
- Food items and juice boxes are permitted inside the Ballpark, provided they are not inside a hard-sided cooler or container.
- Pets are not allowed inside the Ballpark. However, guide dogs for persons with sight disabilities are permitted.
- The resale (scalping) of Indians tickets is strictly prohibited and subject to prosecution by the Cleveland Police Department.
- Fans are permitted to bring and display banners, provided they do not interfere with the game, obstruct the view of fans, or carry obscene, political or commercial messages. Banners may be hung from the facing of the Upper Deck. Poles and sticks are strictly prohibited.

- Fans may bring small umbrellas into Jacobs Field as long as they do not interfere with other fans' enjoyment of the game. Large golf umbrellas are discouraged.
- Cameras and video recorders are permitted. However, any resale of the photography or video is strictly prohibited. Team name, logos, and players' likenesses are all copyrighted material.
- Persons observed breaking the law (eg. using illegal drugs, or drinking alcohol under age) will be subject to immediate ejection and/or criminal prosecution.
- Persons using obscene or abusive language, or engaging in any other antisocial conduct offensive to those around them, will be asked by Indians personnel to cease this conduct. If the offensive conduct persists, those involved will be ejected from Jacobs Field.
- Persons entering the playing field, throwing or attempting to throw objects onto the field will be subject to immediate ejection from Jacobs Field and/or criminal prosecution.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or problems, please visit the Indians Guest Service Center, located at Section 116 of the Main Concourse and in Section 519 of the Upper Concourse, or see one of our "Hosts" throughout the Ballpark. The Indians thank you for your cooperation.

"It is our intention to make our home a safe, comfortable, family-oriented facility so every trip to Jacobs Field is most enjoyable," said Dennis Lehman, Indians Executive Vice President of Business.

"We believe these fan ground rules will ensure the intimate environment that we all seek."



Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson

MINOR LEAGUE OPERATIONS/SCOUTING



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 Mark Shapiro Director, Minor League Operations
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 Brian Graham Defensive Coordinator
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 Dr. Charles A. Maher Instructor/Sport Psychologist
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 Jerry Jordan. East Coast Supervisor
 Bob Mayer Midwest Supervisor
 Bill Schmidt National Crosschecker

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 Max Semler. KY, MS, TN
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 Ontario and Quebec, Canada
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 Major League Scouts Dan Carnevale,
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 Jay Robertson, Ted Simmons, Bill Werle

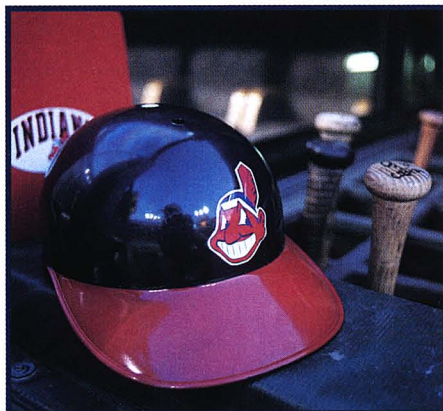


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Too Good To Be True...

By Jim Ingraham

Marquis Grissom is too good to be true. Seriously.

The worst thing about him is that there is only one of him.

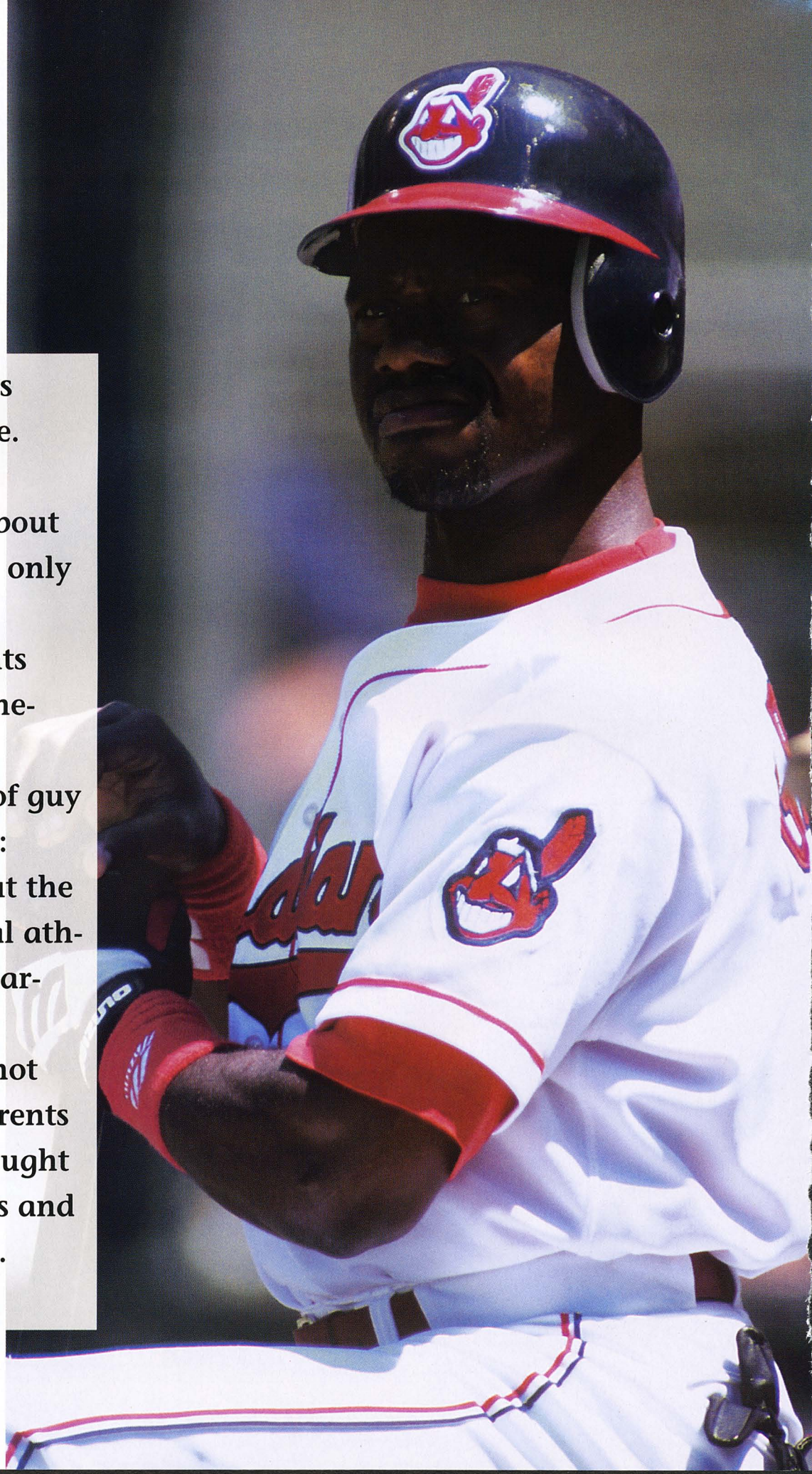
Not that his parents didn't try to do something about that.

Here's what kind of guy Marquis Grissom is:

You've heard about the famous professional athlete who buys his parents a new house?

Marquis Grissom not only bought his parents a new house, he bought each of his brothers and sisters a new house.

All 14 of them.



"Everyone in my neighborhood had huge families," says Grissom, who was born and raised in Fairburn, GA, just outside of Atlanta. "Our neighbors on one side of us had 17 kids. The people on the other side of us had 14. Down the street there was another family that had eight kids, and another one had nine. Everyone had big families. The smallest family in my neighborhood was six kids."

Team Grissom took a back seat to nobody in Fairburn.

On April 17, 1967, Julia Grissom gave birth to a son, who was later named Marquis Deon. That was her 14th child.

Three years later Julia gave birth to another son, Antonio.

That made 15.

Fifteen?

That's right, 15.

"She's a strong woman," says Marquis of his mother.

Julia and her husband Marion, who worked for 27 years in a Ford plant before retiring, raised their 15 children to be proud, confident, polite, respectful, determined adults.

Especially Marquis.

Marquis? You mean like the car?

Bingo!

Marquis was named by his father, who worked in that Ford plant, after the Marquis automobile.

"All my brothers and sisters have normal names. I'm the only one who has a sort of different one," Grissom says. "My Dad named me after the car. He never told me why, but everyone teased my parents that they named me that because they ran out of names."

Thirty years before he would play center field and bat leadoff for the Cleveland Indians, Marquis Grissom was brought home from the hospital by his mother following his birth, little

knowing that he was already No. 14 in the family pecking order.

When Antonio was born three years later, Team Grissom was complete. Fifteen children, who today range from 27 to 51.

What's it like growing up with 14 brothers and sisters?

"Most of the time there were only eight or nine living at home with my parents at a time," says Grissom, who today has 34 nieces and nephews. "All of us worked around the house. It was like a big team."

By the time Grissom was old enough to start playing sports, between his own family and the families in the neighborhood, he didn't have to go looking for games. The games came looking for him.

"My main sport growing up was football," he says.

Grissom was good enough at football to be recruited as a college quarterback. He accepted a combination football-baseball

scholarship to Florida A&M University. He liked football, but he loved baseball. His football career ended after just a few practices.

"I realized I loved baseball too much, and that I wasn't going to start in football as a freshman, so I quit football to concentrate on baseball," Grissom says.

Good choice.

Grissom was primarily a pitcher in college. When he wasn't pitching he'd play almost everywhere else, except for catcher. In 1988 he was 9-3, with a 2.40 ERA as a pitcher, and he hit .448 with 12 home runs as a position player.

He was selected by the Montreal Expos in the third round of the 1988 June Amateur Draft. Selected as a pitcher, believe it or not.

"I went to camp that first year with Montreal, and actually started out pitching," Grissom says. "It was the Expos who decided I should switch to the outfield. That was fine with me. I wanted to play every day, and you couldn't do that as a pitcher."

Grissom needed just one full year in the Minors before making it to Montreal.

His second year with the Expos his salary was \$140,000.

That's \$10,000 below today's Major League minimum. But to Grissom, it was enough to do something he'd always wanted to do for his parents. He built them a new home. That allowed Marion and Julia to move out of the house where they raised their 15 children. It was a house that didn't have running water or air conditioning until the last year the Grissoms lived in it.

"Building that house for my parents was more gratifying to me than anything I've



Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson



"I got to meet Hank Aaron when I was in high school and won an award for being the top player in Georgia. Meeting him was the greatest thing that ever happened to me. Still."

(Marquis Grissom with Hank Aaron)

and to respect others. And especially to work hard. I got my work ethic from my Mom."

He got his direction from his brothers, who steered him into the same sports they played.

And he got his inspiration from his two boyhood heroes, Jackie Robinson and Hank Aaron.

"I got to meet Hank Aaron when I was in high school and won an award for being the top player in Georgia," Grissom says. "Meeting him was the greatest thing that ever happened to me. Still."

Grissom never met Robinson, who blazed the trail Grissom and all other black players followed into the Major

Leagues. But that only increases the awe Grissom feels for Robinson's achievements.

"What he did was amazing," Grissom says. "I could have never dealt with it the way he did. They should teach a whole course on Jackie Robinson in schools. I had to read about him myself, on my own, because we never learned about it in school. Every young kid coming up should know about Jackie Robinson."

If Grissom has his way, all the kids in his old neighborhood will know all about Jackie Robinson.

"I go back to my old neighborhood all the time, and talk to the kids about how important it is learn to read and to read as many books as possible," Grissom says.

Grissom played for the Expos for five years, before being traded to the Braves in April, 1995, the year Atlanta beat the Indians in the World Series.

Along the way, Grissom says he has tried to learn as much about the game as he could every year.

"You've got to respect the game," he says. "I learned that from watching the example set by guys like Terry Pendleton, Fred McGriff, Paul Molitor, Andy Van Slyke, and Eddie Murray. As I was coming up I tried to take a little bit from each player I liked, then add some of my own stuff. But the thing I learned from all those guys is that you'd better respect the game always. Because if you don't, it will come back to haunt you."

Grissom says he developed that philosophy because he doesn't consider himself the type of player who can get by on talent alone.

"I'm not a star. I'm one of those middle guys who has to work hard for everything he gets," Grissom says. "There are only so many elite players like Ken Griffey Jr. The rest of us have to work hard day in, day out."

ever done in baseball," Grissom says. "To be able to do that for them was better than winning the World Series."

Grissom says he had always wanted to pay back his parents, who he says were his greatest influence growing up.

"I built that house for them, not to make me look good, but because it was something I've always wanted to do," he says. "I always want to remember where I came from and do whatever I can for the people who supported me growing up."

From the moment he was traded to the Indians at the end of Spring Training, Grissom's reputation as a player of towering character and class preceded him. He's a player of immense pride, with a passion for playing the game the right way.

"He's everything (Braves manager) Bobby Cox said he was," says Indians bench coach Johnny Goryl. "Exactly. He's very well respected by the staff and players alike."

Says Tribe first base coach Dave Nelson: "Marquis is a coach's dream. He's such a professional. He cares about what he does, and wants to do it right. He has no ego problem. He always wants to do what's best for the team."

Ask others who know him to describe Grissom, and the raves start to echo against one another.

"He takes a lot of pride in his ability, and the way he plays the game," Indians Manager Mike Hargrove says. "He's worked very diligently to adjust to a new team and a new league."

And all of whatever he is and has become is owed to his parents, Grissom says.

"They were the biggest influence in my life," he says. "Especially my Mom. She raised me to be disciplined,



Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson

"I've played for 7 1/2 years, and I'd like to play for another 7 1/2 years. That was my goal when I started out. To play 15 years in the big leagues." — Marquis Grissom

And, in case you hadn't noticed, Grissom is pretty good at reaching his goals.

Which brings us back to the houses he's bought for his family.

Starting with the house he built for his parents in 1990, Grissom has continued to buy houses for all of his brothers and sisters since then.

"After I built the one for my parents, I bought two or three the next year, then four or five the year after that. Every year I try to do a little something," he says.

Today, Grissom owns 12 houses in which various members of his family live. All of them are located in the same Atlanta suburb, barely eight miles from the home that the 15 Grissom children grew up in.

"I did it all on my own, in my own way," Grissom says. "It's good for my sisters and brothers, and their children, to know they have someone who cares about them, about where they live, where they go to school. Stuff like that. This keeps us all together. I can afford it, so why not?"

Too good to be true.

Manager John Hart wasted little time in signing Grissom to a four-year contract extension earlier this season.

"I've played 7 1/2 years, and I'd like to play another 7 1/2 years," Grissom says. "That was my goal when I started out. To play 15 years in the big leagues."

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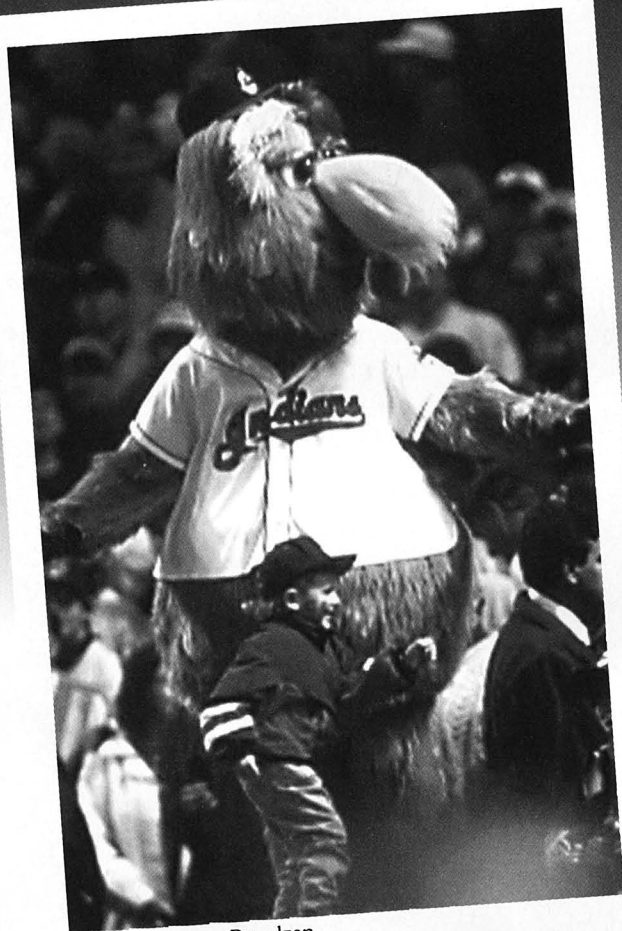


Photo by Gregory Drezdzon

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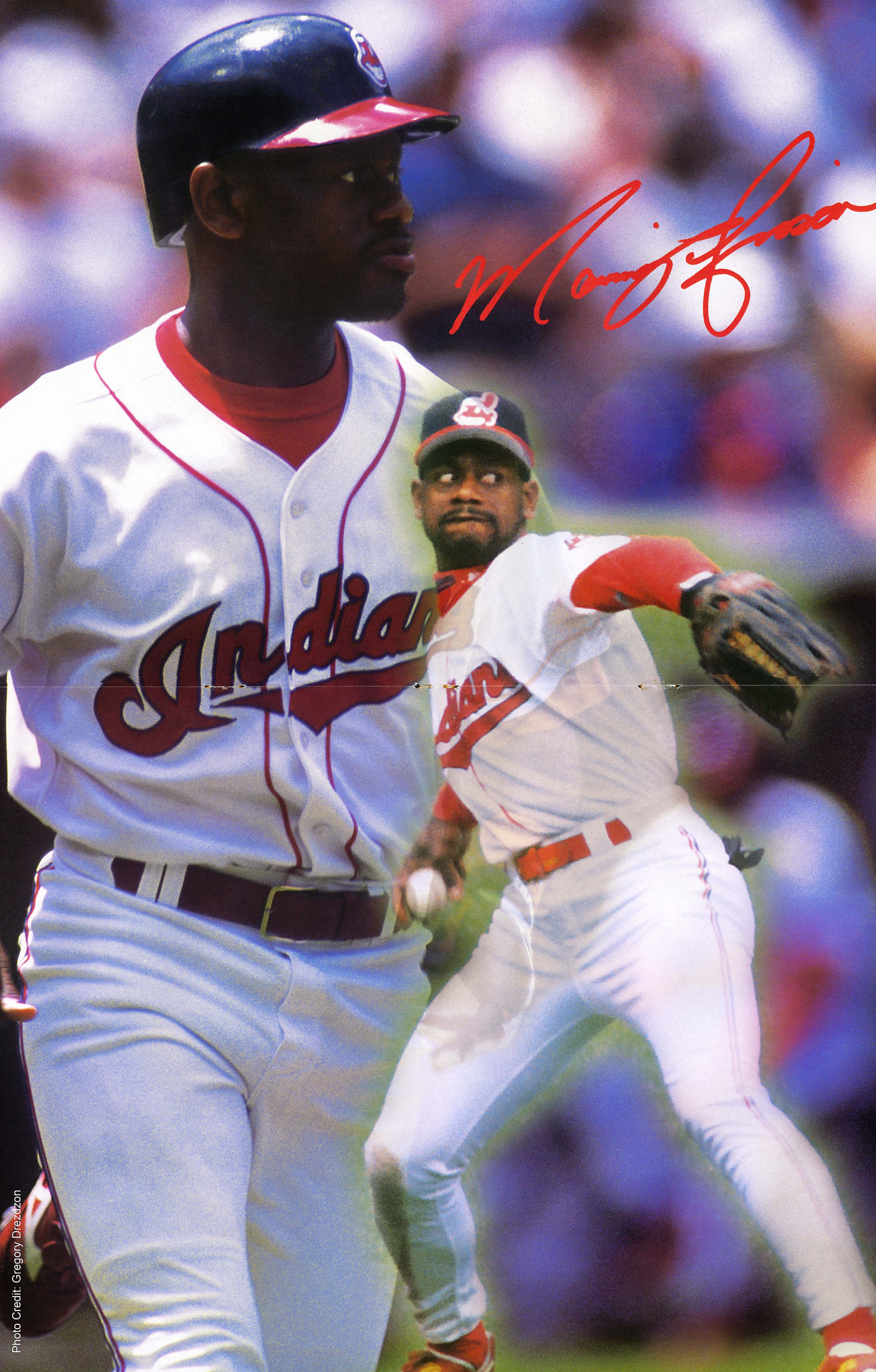
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Baseball Overseas

by Richard Keller

It was a dramatic statement, loaded with innuendo. The scene was the Tokyo Dome on a Friday night last November, when a capacity crowd of passionate Japanese baseball fans packed the rafters to watch the best pro players of their nation host a team of elite Major Leaguers in the opening game of the 1996 Japan All-Star Tour. The U.S. team, managed by Dusty Baker of the San Francisco Giants, was comprised of the game's present-day stars, including Cal Ripken, Barry Bonds, Juan Gonzalez, Mike Piazza, Alex Rodriguez, and the Indians own Julio Franco and Jose Mesa.

"I didn't know much about the strategy of Japanese baseball," said Baker. "So I asked Julio what to expect, because he'd played over there." Franco spent the '95 season with the Chiba Lotte Marines and had strong recollections of the Japanese style of play. Said Franco, "I told Dusty from my experience they're very conservative. If someone gets on first, they usually bunt him to second. They don't steal bases often, and they're hesitant to take the extra base on a hit, because they don't want to get thrown out. They seldom play for a big inning, and they mainly rely on pitching and defense."

Franco was factual in his scouting report. In Japanese baseball, for example, it's a point of honor to score the first run of a game. It's standard procedure when a hitter reaches base early in a scoreless duel that he be bunted forward to increase his chances of scoring the precious first run. "But right off the bat, they changed up on us," said Baker. "Their manager that night, Mr. Namura, had them running like crazy, and they didn't bunt at all. It really took us by surprise. It messed with our minds a little bit." Before the visiting American team could catch its collective breath, the Japanese stars had put five runs on the board in the first inning. And they maintained their lead all the way through a tense 6-5 victory that sent fans into frenzied delight.

The Japanese stars' first-inning uprising,



Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson

complete control. You're supposed to work hard and not talk back. It's sort of like being in the service," Manuel said. "When you first get there, you go through an acceptance period, where they get to know what kind of person you are, and they either accept you or they don't. Your makeup and attitude counts a lot. I was popular there because I played hard and practiced hard. I showed them I wasn't just there for the money. My first year I only hit about .240 with 12 home runs, and I thought I'd get released. But they brought me back and I went on to have some big years."

Continued Manuel, "The conditioning program was stringent, but when I left there, I missed the practices more than the games. One of the biggest things it taught me was discipline. In my playing days here, I was immature. My work habits weren't very good for a professional athlete. They taught me to be more dedicated."

In fact, said Manuel, "My experience in Japan made me into a baseball career man. If I'd retired as a player over here, I doubt if I'd have become a coach or manager. It also helped me as a person. It helped me to focus better and understand more about what makes different people tick. I had tremendous years there, but I give the credit to the managers and coaches who made me practice."

Now, years later, Manuel played a key role in helping the Indians form a working agreement with his former team, the Yakult Swallows. Said O'Dowd, "Our mission started a few years ago when we wanted to establish a relationship with a club in Japan, because we feel baseball is growing on a global basis, and we wanted to expand our ability to scout players in other parts of the world."

Indians officials went about making informal inquiries to various Japanese franchises. "Eventually through Charlie,



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HOW TO SCORE

Baseball fans can enjoy the sport to the fullest extent by keeping track of the game and pinpointing those big plays that bring victory or defeat. All you need is a basic knowledge of the rules.

Although there are countless scoring methods, experts use a simple code based on numbering players by position and tracing action through the use of symbols. It's easy and fun.

In fact, why not devise your own scoring system with the basic suggestions on this page.

One such suggestion on player substitutions is to use a heavy or wavy line under or over a box to indicate a change, either of a player or batter.

If a batter flies to the right-fielder, merely use the figure 9. If it is a foul fly, use 9F.

Now that you are an official "scorer," you can really enjoy baseball games.

Team	Pos.	1	2
Rightfielder	9	4-6 W	
2nd Baseman	4	3 ④FO	
1st Baseman	3	=	
Centerfielder	8	SF 8	
Designated Hitter	DH	K	
Leftfielder	7		4-6
Catcher	2		DP 4-6-3
3rd Baseman	5		⊞
Shortstop	6		7
Pitcher	1		
TOTALS	R / H	1 / 1	1 / 2

Walked and was forced out at second (2nd baseman to shortstop).

Reached first on fielder's choice when runner was forced out, advanced to third on double by 3rd place hitter, scored on 4th place hitter's sacrifice fly.

Doubled; did not advance further.

Flied out to center field scoring runner on third.

Struck out—end of the inning.

Singled; later forced out at second (2nd baseman to shortstop in first half of double play).

Hit into double play (2nd baseman to shortstop to 1st baseman).

Hit home run.

Flied out to leftfielder—end of inning.

USE THESE SYMBOLS FOR PLAYS

— Single
= Double
≡ Triple
≡ Home Run
E Error
F Foul Fly
DP Double Play

FC Fielder's Choice
HP Hit by Pitcher
WP Wild Pitch
SB Stolen Base
SH Sacrifice Hit
SF Sacrifice Fly
CS Caught Stealing

PB Passed Ball
BK Balk
K Struck Out
BB Base on Balls
FO Forced Out
IW Intentional Walk

CAN YOU SCORE THIS PLAY?

The ball was hit to the shortstop, who threw it to the second baseman. The second baseman was able to force out the runner who had been at first. He then threw the ball to the first baseman to get the batter out, turning a double play.

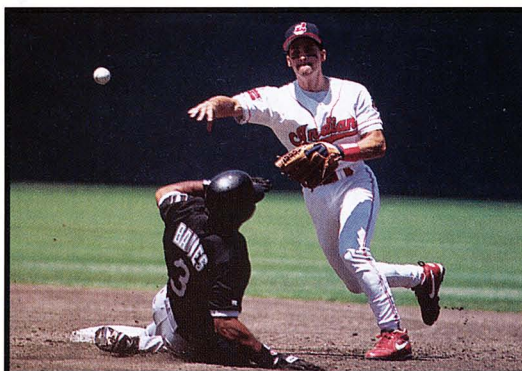
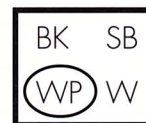


Photo credit: Gregory Drezdson



In this example, the hitter reached first base on a walk, stole second, advanced to third on pitcher's balk, scored on a wild pitch.

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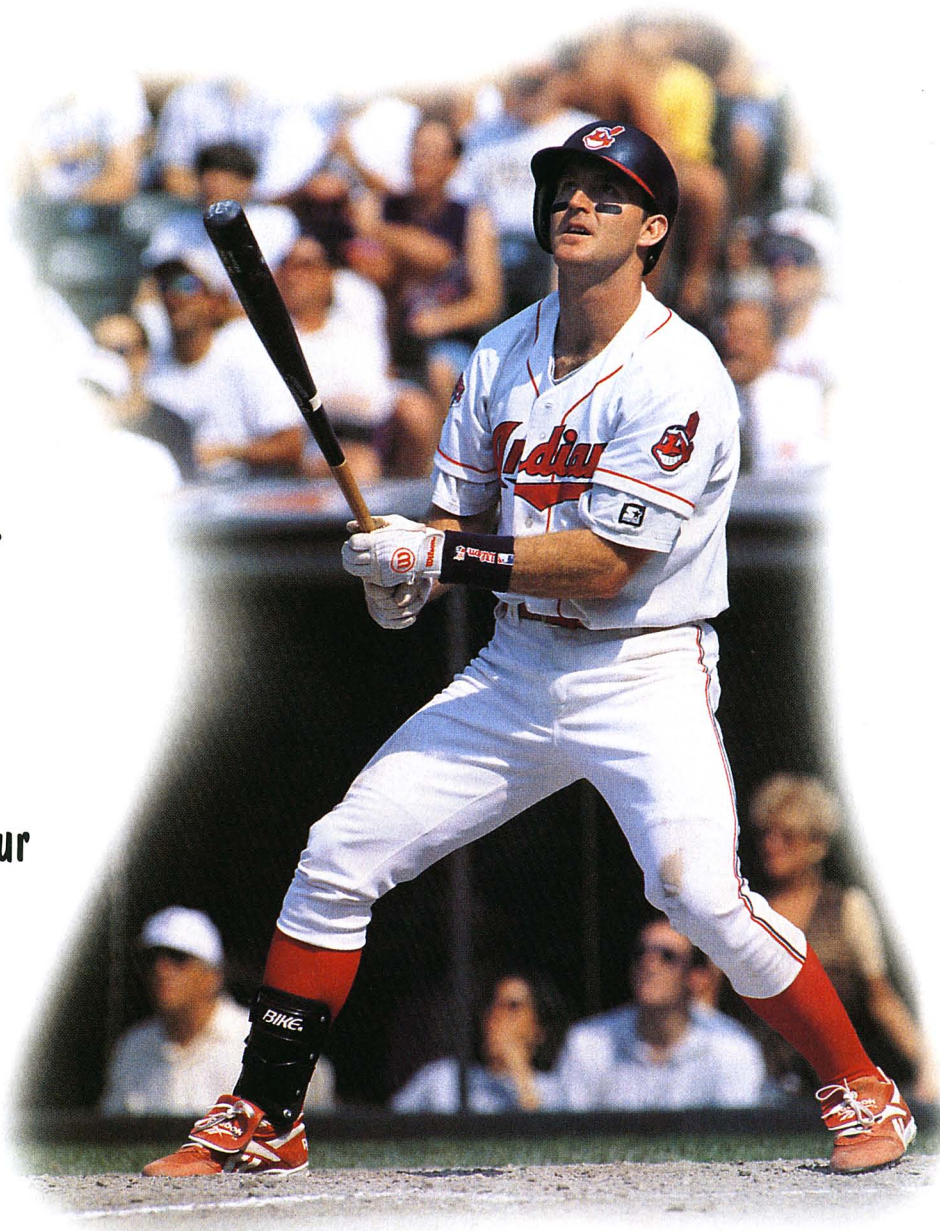


Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdson

Indians Slugger Jim Thome spent three years in the Tribe's Minor League system before he put on an Indians uniform. But you just have to spend a few minutes at the Indians Team Shops, because here, you can get official Tribe jerseys and caps just like the players wear. You can also get T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, jackets, baseballs, pennants, flags, videos, children's items, and novelties, too.

Stock up for the new season while the selection is good. Visit the Indians Team Shop at Jacobs Field, the Galleria at Erieview, Belden Village Mall in Canton, Great Lakes Mall in Mentor, Westgate Mall in Fairview Park, SouthPark Center in Strongsville, and Summit Mall in Fairlawn.

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BIG LEAGUE BLESSINGS

by Steve Herrick

Kevin Seitzer already has his baseball plans for next season mapped out.

Yes, he'll still be involved in the game, but instead of spraying line drives all over the ballpark and showing the aggressive style that's been a trademark of his 11-year career, Seitzer will be taking on a new role.

"I told my kids I was going to be their Little League coach next year," he said. "I'm not going back on that."

The gain of the Little League teams of Leawood, KS, in which Brandon and Cameron Seitzer play, will be Major League Baseball's loss. When Seitzer retires at the end of this season, there will be a void in the game.

The classy veteran took a .296 career average into this season. Seitzer, 35, has overcome a lot of adversity to form a solid career. He has had five knee operations (three on the left and two on the right), survived two beanings and resurrected his career after being released twice in a 17-month span.

So as Seitzer heads to the end of his career, he knows how he would like to be remembered.

"I've put up respectable numbers, but I think I'd rather be known as a player who played hard, played hurt, and was a player you could count on," he said.

"Kevin is a solid professional," said Indians Manager Mike Hargrove. "From the way he approaches the game, prepares himself, and plays the game, he's a true professional."

It didn't take long for Indians fans to learn how valuable Seitzer could be. He was acquired from Milwaukee for outfielder Jeromy Burnitz last August 31, minutes before the trade deadline for players to be eligible for post season play. In 22 games with the Indians, Seitzer, who was used primarily as the designated hitter while seeing some action at first, batted .386 with 16 RBI and provided the team with a needed spark.

Seitzer had a 14-game hitting streak after the trade. His biggest moment came when he hit a grand slam off Chicago's Alex Fernandez on September 17, 1996 the night the Indians clinched their second



Photo credit: Gregory Drezdron

straight American League Central Division title.

Seitzer might have been the happiest man in the Indians clubhouse that night. He was going to the playoffs for the first time in his career. He batted .294 with two doubles and four RBI in the Division Series against Baltimore. Seitzer went 2-for-4 and drove in three runs in the Indians 9-4 win in Game 3.

Although the Indians didn't return to the World Series last season, getting to the Fall Classic was a major reason Seitzer decided to play a final year.

"I wanted to win a World Series," he said. "That would be the greatest thing if we could do that. I've had a lot of individual accomplishments, but that will be something I can look back on later in life."

Seitzer's final season has had its ups and downs. With the Indians well-stocked at both DH and first base, he didn't see much playing time in the first half of the season. That wasn't easy, even for the ultimate team player.

"It was a little more difficult than I thought it would be," he said.

"That's more from a selfish standpoint when you're used to playing every day."

Seitzer found himself torn between wanting to be part of a winning team and wanting to contribute to that effort.

"It's fun to win, but it's more fun to win when you're playing and contributing," he said. "It's difficult to find ways to contribute from the bench, but that's the selfish side that keeps getting in the way."

Seitzer became a Christian in 1988. That strength has helped him through the previous rough times in his career and this season.

"God's given me the peace of mind to get through this," he said. "If not for that, I don't think I'd be a very happy person to be around. I wouldn't have been able to handle it earlier in my career. I'm looking at this year as a blessing in disguise. Now I don't have to wonder if I could adjust to a bench role."

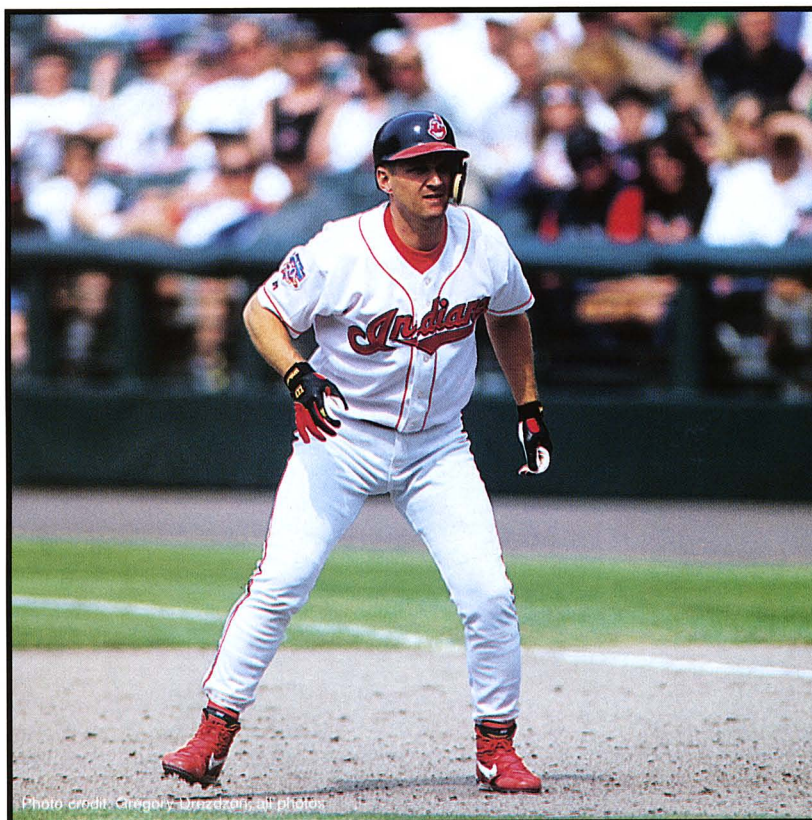


Photo credit: Gregory Drezdorn

Seitzer has put in extra work, but not in the manner some people would think.

"The only thing I do extra is take extra ground balls," he said. "I don't like to take extra hitting very much in this role. I found if I take too much extra batting practice, I take batting practice swings into the game. What I try to do is, if I do well in the last game I played, I try to take that into the next game. I've never been much of an extra

batting practice guy, anyway. I've found I've taken regular batting practice and been ready. It's a long season. If you take too much extra batting practice, it can wear you out."

As the Indians headed into the All-Star break, Seitzer's role began to expand. His two-run, pinch-hit homer in the ninth inning gave the Indians a win in Houston on June 30 and he was seeing more action as the DH.

Seitzer was Kansas City's 11th round draft pick in 1983. He was in the big leagues by late in the 1986 season and finished second in the

American League "Rookie of the Year" balloting to Oakland's Mark McGwire the following year. Seitzer hit .323 and tied the Twins' Kirby Puckett for the league lead in hits with 207.

Seitzer, who primarily played third base early in his career, put together three more solid seasons with the Royals before sore knees limited him to a career-low 85 games in 1991. He had surgery on both knees in 1991.

Little did he know at the time, but his career with the Royals was over. Kansas City released him late in the following Spring Training. He still doesn't agree with the Royals' reasoning.

"They said I lost my desire to play the game," he said. "That wasn't easy at all. I didn't agree at all."

The double knee surgery was another factor.

"I think they saw my speed slow way down," he said. "I just had my first double knee surgery."

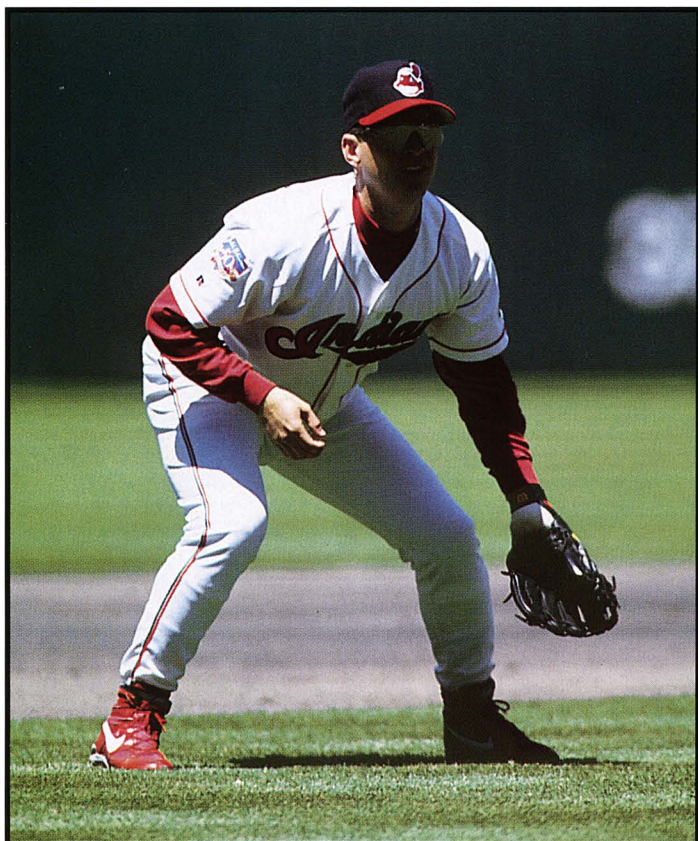


Photo credit: Gregory Drezdson



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**SEITZER BATTED .314
IN 1994 AND .311 IN
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.316 WITH THE
BREWERS AT THE
TIME OF THE TRADE AND
BATTED A COMBINED
.326 FOR THE SEASON.**

I was having a hard time with my knees the way they were."

Seitzer signed with Milwaukee before the 1991 season began and batted .270. He signed with Oakland in the off-season, but was released in July of 1993. Seitzer then re-signed with the Brewers and batted .290 the rest of the season.

"That ended up being the best thing that ever happened to me," he said. "I went to Milwaukee and reestablished my game."

Reestablished his game, indeed. Seitzer batted .314 in 1994 and .311 in 1995. He was hitting .316 with the Brewers at the time of the trade and batted a combined .326 for the season.

Seitzer had double knee surgery again in 1994. He had surgery on his left knee after last season.

"That's probably been the most frustrating part, losing all my speed and losing all my mobility," he said. "That had been a big part of my game, putting pressure on the other team."

Seitzer stole a total of 39 bases in his first three years in the big leagues. He even stole 13 bases in 1992 after his first double surgery. Since then, his highest steal total was six, which was done last season with the Brewers.

Seitzer knows he will need to have both knees replaced at some point. He can often be seen in the Indians clubhouse wearing ice packs on both knees after games.

"I'll have to do it when I can't take the pain anymore," he said. "It's something I want to put off as long as possible."

Knee ailments haven't been Seitzer's only physical problem. He suffered multiple facial fractures after being hit by a pitch thrown by New York's Melido Perez, but sat out only one game. In 1995, he was hit in the head by Minnesota's Scott Erickson and suffered a concussion. Seitzer has worn a face mask on his helmet since.

Seitzer has made two All-Star Game appearances. The first came in 1987 with the Royals. The second came in 1995 with the Brewers. Not many players can say they made two All-Star teams eight years apart.

"That was nice," he said. "It was great to come back, especially after being released twice. That's something I was proud of."

As his career winds down, Seitzer has plenty to be proud of. He'll end his career with close to 1,600 hits, five .300-plus seasons, two All-Star appearances, the respect of his teammates, opponents and fans, his coveted post season berth and, who knows, maybe a World Series ring. So it's no surprise Seitzer nears retirement with the following thoughts.

"I've been blessed in this game big time," he said.

So has everyone who's had the chance to watch him play.

THE PLAYERS



Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdon



46
Jason
Jacome

pitcher

Bats: L **Height:** 6'1"
Throws: L **Weight:** 185
Born: 11/24/70 **Resides:** Tucson, AZ

1996...

- Finished 0-4 with a 4.72 ERA and 1 save in 49 games (2 starts) for the Kansas City Royals (47.2 IP, 67 H, 27 R/25 ER, 22 BB, 32 SO)... Lone save of the season came on September 1 at Detroit... Recorded six holds on the year.
- Was 0-3 with a 2.47 ERA in his 47 relief appearances and 0-1 with a 29.35 ERA in his two starts... Allowed just 1 ER over an 18.2-inning stretch covering 20 appearances from May 13-July 7.
- Allowed just 11 of 35 inherited runners to score on the year... Retired 30 of 47 first batters faced in his relief appearances... Entered a game before the sixth inning just twice all season.



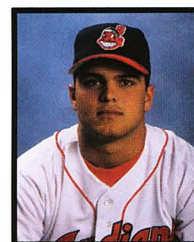
50
David
Weathers

pitcher

Bats: R **Height:** 6'3"
Throws: R **Weight:** 220
Born: 9/25/69 **Resides:** Loretto, TN

1996...

- Was 0-2 with a 9.35 ERA in 11 appearances (4 GS) for the New York Yankees and 2-2 with a 4.54 ERA in 31 appearances for the Florida Marlins.
- Was traded to the Yankees for RHP Mark Hutton on July 31.
- After four starts with the Yankees, he was optioned to AAA Columbus on August 21... After being recalled on September 13, he was 0-0 with a 1.29 ERA in seven relief appearances... Was 2-0 with a 0.82 ERA (11 IP, 1 ER) in the Post Season.
- Acquired by the Cleveland Indians from the New York Yankees in exchange for Chad Curtis, June 9, 1997.



27
Jaret
Wright

pitcher

Bats: R **Height:** 6'2"
Throws: R **Weight:** 230
Born: 12/29/75 **Resides:** Anaheim, CA

1996/'97...

- Made his Major League debut on June 24, 1997 vs. Minnesota... Got the win in the Tribe's 10-5 victory... His father, Clyde, also made his debut vs. Minnesota.
- Went 4-1 with a 1.80 ERA in seven '97 starts at Buffalo (45.0 IP, 30 H, 16 R/9 ER, 19 BB, 47 SO) before his call to the big leagues... AAA batters were hitting .185 (30-162) off him in '97.
- At Class A Kinston in '96, Jaret went 7-4 w/a 2.50 ERA in 19 GS... Suffered a broken jaw at the 1996 Class A All-Star Game when he was hit by a bat swung by Durham's Ron Wright... Tribe's first round selection in the '94 June Draft (#10 overall).



Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzen

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